

ADDRESS

OF

Hon. S. V. WHITE,

UPON THE

RACE QUESTION IN THE SOUTH,

Delivered at Salisbury, N. C.

BEFORE THE

LITERARY SOCIETIES OF LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE,

MAY 27th, 1890.

*Mr. President, Members of the Faculty and Literary Societies of  
Livingstone College :*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I have come to you from my home in a distant State, in response to an invitation from your literary societies, to deliver an address at the anniversary of your young and promising school of letters and of art; and, I say to you as the opening sentence of my address, that in the course of a busy life I never approached the discharge of any duty, whether public or private, with so profound a sense of responsibility to my country and to humanity, as I feel in speaking upon the questions which I am impelled to discuss here to-day.

Mr. President, it is not a question of sentiment or association which so impresses me, though sentiment and association thrill me, as though a divinity stirred the innermost depths of my being.

I have come to the State of my birth, with a North Carolinian's love of Carolina—a love which no son of hers ever could eradicate if he would, or ever would eradicate, if he could.

I speak to you in the vicinage, where lie buried the ashes of my ancestors, who lived and died in Carolina from the days of Cromwell to the present generation.

I come back to North Carolina with renewed admiration for her wondrous history, and renewed veneration for her illustrious and historic names.

As a matter of sentiment I recall what no Carolinian can ever forget—that the first English settlement in America was made in North Carolina. Let us as Carolinians remember, that while yet the Spanish Empire was the most powerful the world had till then seen; when her legions outnumbered those of the imperious Cæsar; when her territorial borders embraced an area greater than the world which Alexander conquered; and when upon the seas the "Armada's pride" challenged great Neptune himself to conflict;—in those far-off days when Shakespeare wrote and Sir Philip Sidney wrought; when England's Maiden Queen ruled and Scotland's too-often-married Queen died;—that, then, the great courtier and statesman for whom North Carolina named her capital, changed the destiny of humanity, by commencing in North Carolina, that English colonization which gave America to freedom of thought, and to Anglo-Saxon and anti-papal rule.

Have I exaggerated the importance of this movement of England under the counsel and leadership of Raleigh? I need only digress a moment to emphasize the absolute correctness of the statement.

Shakespeare, the compeer and friend of Raleigh, who wrote as no other inspired man has ever written, has given us his estimate of England, and England's greatness.

The great bard, in his drama of Richard the Second, puts into the mouth of his dying patriot, John of Gaunt, his estimate of England's claim to greatness.

Speaking of England, the stern old John is made to say :

"This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle;  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars;  
This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
This fortress, built by Nature for herself  
Against infestation and the hand of war;  
This happy breed of men, this little world;  
This precious stone, set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands."

Such was the poet's estimate of England in the year of Grace 1584.

To him it was a fortress and a safe retreat in time of danger; but to Raleigh it was a throne on which kings should sit, and issue edicts which the world must needs obey.

To Shakespeare, England was a gem "set in the silver sea," and the sea itself was but a "moat defensive to a house."

To Sir Walter Raleigh, England was to be a treasury, and the sea a great highway, upon which the obedient winds should waft the surplus of the world to fill that treasure-house. Raleigh's counsels prevailed. The march of England's empire "westward took its way," which should cease not, till it had swept around and around the globe; and its first footstep in this grand march was set on Roanoke Island, in North Carolina.

If other matter of sentiment is needed to warm the heart, and arouse the enthusiasm of a Carolinian, you will find it in the struggle against English exactions, in which North Carolina was always in the lead.

The world knows by heart the history of the Boston stamp riots, in which much speech-making, and much printing, and some burning in effigy and destruction of buildings were conspicuous, for Boston was a thrifty borough, with an efficient corps of weekly-newspaper writers for the Boston papers, which were already established. The world may not so well know that in sparsely settled North Carolina, which had no newspaper, the resistance was more orderly, and equally bold and efficient,—but we as Carolinians will never forget it.

You will recall the fact that the hated stamps reached Boston on August 18, 1765, and were duly landed and stored, although never used.

On September 28, 1765, the English sloop-of-war *Diligence* arrived off Fort Johnson, North Carolina, conveying the same hated stamps, where she was soon joined by the *Viper*, but they were met by the determined North Carolina yeomanry, under John Ashe and Hugh Waddell, with the firm decree that the stamps should not even be landed on Carolina soil.

For nearly five months the two war vessels lay at anchor in the offing, unable to land their despised freight. In February, 1776, these two vessels seized two coasters, which had sailed from Philadelphia without stamps on their manifests, and held them for confiscation by the admiralty court,

at Brunswick. Straightway the firm militiamen, under Ashe and Waddell, seized the transport used in carrying victuals from the shore to the war-ships, and notified the commanders that not another mouthful should be delivered to the sloop-of-war till the coasters were released. Under the influence of impending starvation the trading vessels were released, and the war-ships having been re-victualled, sullenly sailed away, bearing with them their hated consignment.

Thus the old North State, by the bravery of her militia, was saved forever from the contamination of King George's stamps, and she stands today upon the page of history, unique among her sister colonies, alike for the dignity and the firmness with which she repelled that great injustice.

Nay, more. While on the subject of Carolina's resistance to British exactions, standing on this historic ground, in this old town of Salisbury, can any Carolinian ever forget, that the first blood of the Revolution was shed not at Lexington, in the State of Massachusetts, but at Great Alamance Creek, in the State of North Carolina?

It is true that in that bloody battle, the rank and file of both forces were North Carolinians, but the troops who fought for the King, were commanded by the execrable Tryon,—the English Governor,—and the battle was joined, in resistance of unjust and corrupt taxation. The battle was fought May 15th, 1771—nearly four years before Paul Revere's wild night-ride from the Charles river to the Lexington meeting-house, aroused the Massachusetts minute-men to resist the invading troops, on April 19th, 1775, at Lexington and Concord.

One hundred and nineteen years ago this very month, in the historic town in which we now are assembled, the brave General Waddell, who, with his militia had sent back the *Diligence* and *Viper* from before Fort Johnson, called his men together, this time in support of the Governor, whom all despised, but who was the representative of King George in North Carolina.

The militiamen came. They consulted together, and then hesitatingly, but firmly, told their commander, that they could not fight against the men encamped on the Yadkin as the defenders of the people's rights against English tyranny.

The loss in killed and wounded among the Regulators or Colonial troops in the battle of Alamance, can never be known. Under the bloody vengeance of Governor Tryon, it was certain and speedy death to be known as having been wounded, and the wounded were as far as possible concealed.

Tryon reported seventy killed and wounded on his side. The number of the insurgent troops killed has been reported as above one hundred, and there is little doubt, but that the insurgent losses in that first battle against British Tyranny, was more than twice as great as the American losses at the battles of Lexington and Concord, and more than half the losses of Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill combined.

But the purpose of my address does not permit me to dwell longer upon incidents of North Carolina history, and I pass by associations and sentiment, with the mere mention that more than thirty-three years before Peregrine White was born in Plymouth Harbor, in the State of Massachu-

setts, Virginia Dare, daughter of Eleanor White and Ananias Dare, was born, on August 18, 1587, at Roanoke Island, in the State of North Carolina.

I make mention of the fact that in 1784, three years before Virginia and the Northern States ceded the Territory of the Ohio to the Federal Government, North Carolina came, with characteristic generosity, tendering the Territory of Tennessee to the General Government; and although, owing to delays by the Government, the cession was not completed till 1789, yet in this, as in so many other things, North Carolina stands first on the historic page.

And so I break away from historic memories, rendering to my mother State the mead of honor of a dutiful son, honoring her as the first in settlement and first in cession of her territory, as first in the shedding of blood in the defense of her people's rights, and most dignified and efficient in repelling the odious stamp act.

Now will time, for the purpose of this address, permit me to dwell upon the grand and historic names of North Carolina. I would fain speak of Iredell, the great and just jurist—the compeer, and, as I think, the equal of the more renowned Chief Justice Marshall. I would gladly draw the picture of the silver-tongued and knightly William R. Davie, whose eloquence was the eloquence of Patrick Henry, and whose strength was the strength of Samuel Adams. I would fain speak of Caswell, the wise Governor, of Haywood, and the Ashes, both father and son; of the Macons and Johnsons, and of dashing Willie Jones—but I must not.

I dismiss all this train of sentimental reverie with one other thought suited to this time and place: Although North Carolina has never been called the Mother of Presidents, yet three out of the twenty-three of our chief magistrates, were born upon her soil, and of those three, one of them, and he,—the hero who at New Orleans drove back the invading Briton, the patriot and statesman, who from the capitol in Washington, issued the proclamation to South Carolina nullifiers and disunionists, ringing with those immortal and prophetic words, "The Union! By the Eternal, it must and shall be preserved!" he, the immortal Jackson,—was educated for, and admitted to the bar, in this old town of Salisbury, where you boys and girls are now being educated.

Mr. President, you and your faculty and your students have invited me to address you, and I have come.

Now, what shall be my theme? If I could bring myself to feel that I could discharge my whole duty to you, to myself, and to my country by so doing, I could deliver a literary address. I should attempt to make it in well-chosen English, I should embellish it with wit, sentiment, and poetry from ancient and modern classic writers, and, whatever your verdict might be when you heard it or others might say when they read it, I should personally not fear an entire failure.

I may say further that had I consented to address the societies in a New England, or in a Northwestern college, I should probably have essayed an address in that vein, and upon those lines. But for me, in this crisis in my country's affairs, to leave my home in the North, and journey hundreds of miles to your home in the South, to spread before you mere flowers of

rhetoric in some attempted literary prize essay, having no reference to your environments which so deeply affect you and so deeply affect me, would be to offer you apples of Sodom, which would turn to ashes in my hands before they even appeared in the semblance of fruit.

And so I am here to-day to speak to you and your students, as the educated colored men and women of the present and the immediate future, and through you and them to the colored people of the South, upon the vexed and seemingly insoluble problem of the race question, in our country at the present time. I am here to speak to you on this question because I hope and believe, speaking on Carolina soil as a Carolinian, with pulse-beat answering pulse-beat of kindreds and friends in North Carolina, that my words, uttered with so much kindness, and so much candor, and such determined fidelity to truth, may be heard, and read, and considered, by the educated white people of the South in the spirit of candor and fairness, in which at least they are intended.

Mr. President, no man can more fully realize the delicacy and difficulty of my task, than I. In that difficulty I am reminded of the story of Penelope, and the task she set for her successful suitor. Your students will find, when they come to read the great epic poet of Greece, that Ulysses, the husband of Penelope, having gone to the wars, was gone so long that he was justly supposed to be dead, and Penelope was thought to be a widow.

Like other young, handsome, accomplished, and wealthy widows of ancient and modern times, Penelope had many suitors for a second marriage. All of these suitors were very certain that Ulysses was dead, but Penelope was not so certain, and, until she could assure herself of the fact, she gave them the hardest of tasks to accomplish, upon the success of which the suitor's fortune, and her love should depend.

As a final test she agreed to marry that suitor, who should set up three axes without handles in them, in a row, the space of a bow's length apart, and standing back ten paces, should, with his bow and arrow, shoot the arrow through the eyes of the three axes, without touching either axe.

The moral of my story ends with a statement of the delicacy of the shot; but I am tempted to add, because thereby I may, perchance, stimulate someboy or girl here to extra zeal in the study of Greek, (as recorded in the fable), all the suitors having failed, a dust-stained wanderer, who had appeared upon the scene, took a bow and arrow, and made the successful shot. By his unerring skill with the bow, the faithful Penelope knew him as her long-absent husband, and the family being reunited, they lived happily ever afterwards.

My fellow-citizens, the proper solution of the relations of the dual races in this our country, is a task more difficult than the fabled shot through the axes' eyes, and only its importance to us and to posterity, can justify me in its discussion. But it is not one Penelope but millions, whose fate hangs upon the task which presents itself to America to-day, and which Americans, white and black, must work out for themselves and for posterity, as so many other problems have been solved in the unfolding of the ages past.

In its discussion I shall speak no word through malice or ill will, nor shall I leave any word unspoken, through fear or favor of any created being. In its discussion I shall not coddle the African race, nor extol the negro, though I shall be just to him, (if I have the wisdom to be), and I shall plead for justice for him from my countrymen. I shall enter upon no philippic against my own race, who sprung from Anglo-Saxon or from Norman sires. I shall set before you, if I have the wisdom, fairly and faithfully the difficulties which beset and perplex them, and I shall ask your aid, in so far as you can rightly give it, to help overcome them.

I shall only incidentally mention or discuss slavery. It is a dead barbarism, and the only wonder is that it lived so long.

I shall not discuss secession. It is a dead issue; and very many of the men who precipitated it upon their country, have not only repented of their mistake, but have "brought forth fruit meet for repentance," in a most earnest effort for the good government, and advancement, of a reunited and more stable country than we had before that great error.

I intend to discuss what white men and black men should do, both being here—citizens of a common country—and "both having come to stay," as unquestionably both have done, whether their relation with each other shall be wise, or otherwise.

As an earnest of my fairness to the colored man, let me say that my abhorrence of slavery of which I have spoken as a dead barbarism, has not sprung up since the war, and since the negro had a vote; but, as an illustration of the poetic justice which the rolling years so often bring, I will tell you the school wherein I learned to abhor the system of slavery.

A distinguished and able North Carolina historian, Mr. John W. Moore, speaking of the contrast between Massachusetts bigotry, which drove out Baptists, and whipped Quakers, and hanged witches; and North Carolina tolerance in religious faiths, justly says:

"No Roger Williams has at any time been driven from our midst to seek in deeper wilds the privileges our bigotry was too narrow to afford here. No moral epidemic of frenzy has shed the blood of our people on the paltry excuse of supernatural practices. We have had no Sir William Berkleys or Cotton Mathers to scourge and imprison the unhappy Baptists and Quakers who failed of compliance with what bigotry was pleased to term orthodoxy."

All honor to North Carolina for this record of her tolerance and her justice; but the truth of history must witness that what the intolerance of religious bigotry could not do in North Carolina, the intolerance of slavery did and is doing to-day. I shall recur to the latter clause of this proposition further on in my address.

In the year 1831, a panic swept over the entire South. The uprising and massacres in San Domingo, under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture, had been heard of. The wierd and bloodthirsty Nat. Turner was planning the massacre of Southampton county, in Virginia. Men and women everywhere throughout the South, spoke with bated breath and blanched cheeks.

My father lived with his family in Chatham county. He was a man against whom, through his whole life, the tongue of calumny was never wagged. His honesty and his honor were conceded alike by friend and foe. He acted in the fear of God, and all who knew him acknowledged it.

He was opposed to slavery on principle, and had been from early manhood, and had been accustomed to say so to white men in neighborly discussion.

In the frenzy which swept the country, slavery brooked no opposition and admitted no discussion. Whoever was not for it was against it; and under direct threats of violence, on September 10, 1831, when I was less than six weeks old, he and my mother, with hearts swelling with a genuine Carolina love for home and kindred, with their three little children commenced their weary pilgrimage—out of North Carolina, over the Blue Ridge of Virginia, across the mountains of Tennessee, through the wilderness of Kentucky, beyond the State of Indiana, and into the State of Illinois. They were as much exiles from the intolerance of slavery, as Roger Williams was from the intolerance of bigotry.

It is due to the fidelity of history to say that my father, true to the spirit of the men of that day and of this State, left with his rifle in his hand and at "present arms."

It is now nearly sixty years since his voice was heard for the last time in the State of his birth, pleading the cause of justice and humanity, and I account it a great privilege, having learned the lesson from his teaching, to stand in the State from which he was driven, and to plead the sacred cause of human rights.

And here let me remark, in a parenthesis, that no man may rightly say of me, that because I left the State in my infancy, I am not a Carolinian. My father and mother established a typical Carolina home, in what soon became a Carolina settlement. No man ever entered that home hungry and went away unfed; none ever entered it cold and went away unwarmed; none ever entered it in the darkness without the tender of a bed till morning; and never in his lifetime, was the genuine North Carolina hospitality polluted by a coin touching his palm in payment of his hearty though humble cheer. No; when I claim to be a Carolinian, I know Carolina life and Carolina history and Carolina thought, as well as any of you who hear, or you who read what I say, and I sympathize, from my innermost heart with the white men, as well as with the blacks, in the difficulties which surround them.

And now, if you colored people believe me when I say to you that I abhorred slavery because it was barbarously wrong, and that I plead for justice to your race because it is due, you will, I trust, strive with me, to be just to the men who were your masters, or your fathers' masters. I may say something which will sound strange from the same lips which have just denounced slavery as a gigantic barbarism.

And first I emphasize this proposition: that those who before the war were the slave-owners, were in probably a full average proportion, as just and honorable men, from the standpoint of their sense of right, as the men in other portions of the country were from theirs.



Let us divest ourselves of prejudice in this matter, and be just to slaveholders and white men, as I shall try to influence white men to be just to you.

Did you ever stop to moralize upon the fact, that slavery existed in Judea when Christ came into the world, and that it continued to exist for nearly eighteen hundred years afterward, in every nation in Christendom, and that neither in His ministry here on earth did He specifically denounce it, nor did the church which He established, in any of the various sects into which it became subdivided, in all that time, issue an authoritative denunciation of it? Look where you will, in the Greek Church, in the Roman Church, in the Protestant churches, all recognized its existence and none of them formulated any authoritative denunciation of it. It would be a libel against humanity to contend, that all the Christian ministers in the Southern States, in the various churches, all of whom recognized slavery and fellowshiped with slaveholders, and many of whom held slaves themselves, were insincere and hypocritical.

But, if the ministers did not believe that slavery was wrong, still less would there be cause for the laity to believe it. They were all born into it. They were taught to believe that their ownership in slaves was as right and just, as their ownership in horses; and nine-tenths of them did so believe.

This leads me to the next step in doing justice to the Southern whites. The war of the rebellion was precipitated by the leaders, not by the people. The whole South at once became the theater of war. After four years the cruel strife ended, and the remnant of the population returned to the pursuits of peace. Their lands were devastated, their houses were burned, their cattle had been taken as forage, their slaves were freed, their brothers and sons were slain, and they themselves were maimed, and broken in health by camp exposure. Is it strange that they were sullen and bitter, and, though conquered, they were not convinced? They looked upon their late slaves, as property of which they had been robbed, and they hated the robbers and the spoils.

I state these facts, and I ask you to remember these conditions as leading up to the conditions which we now are about to discuss.

It is needless to theorize or indulge in speculation as to what would have resulted under different conditions. If the Southern States, through their provisional governments, undertaken as a means leading up to the reconstruction of the Union, had shown a hearty readiness to concur in the issues settled by the war, it would seem in all human probability that a much wiser course in the management of affairs in the States lately in rebellion, might have resulted.

But they did not so accept them. On the contrary, they rejected with disdain the terms offered them.

If the Federal Government had then exercised its war prerogative as a conquering power, and had established territorial governments where the statehood of the rebellious States, *already suspended by their own secession*, had still been suspended, and the writs and courts and proceedings, had been under the control of the United States, as those of Utah then were and still

are, it is not improbable that a few years would have healed the asperities of the conflict, and present conditions might very possibly have been different. But of neither of these things can there be any certainty, because neither was tried.

Let us look at the next step in this great history and trace its results. The whole land hungered for a reconstructed and reunited band of States, and with almost one accord, it was finally agreed that there should be universal amnesty and universal suffrage, going hand in hand, and good men, everywhere hoped that it would solve the difficulty.

I do not know now, but this was the only solution possible; but, asking the colored people to free themselves of all prejudice, I call your attention to the evils with which it has been attended, and ask you to consider how far the results have led to the unhappy conditions of the present time.

There was probably never such a reversal of fortune before in the history of any people as that following the war in the South. The lately dominant race, who then owned whatever property remained in these States, and who still sullenly believed they owned their legislators, being numerically fewer than the blacks, were in a hopeless minority; and the lately servile race, who had almost no property, and almost no education, and absolutely no experience in governmental affairs or in political science, were in the ascendancy, and controlling the policy in State affairs.

But even then and under these abnormal conditions, if the government by the negroes had been under the leadership of honest men, all parties would have soon probably acquiesced, and trusted to time and votes to correct wrongs, if any were found to exist.

It is not my purpose to discuss the justness of the wholesale denunciation of what is known as the carpet-bag governments. Doubtless some were corrupt, while others were incompetent, and others were honest; but for the purposes of this discourse, I shall assume that the worst estimate of their character is true. But I remark, in passing, that they did not seem to monopolize, by any trust or "combine," all the thievery of the localities in which they operated. This fact will be emphasized, when it is known, that in the States formerly slave-holding, in which the State treasurers have been elected from the ranks and by the votes of the dominant race, there has been lost, since the war, the sum of \$2,345,144.44 by the defalcations of such home-born Caucasian treasurers. If you have a taste for statistics the following are the names and amounts of the embezzlers and their booty:

Churchill, of Arkansas.....	\$80,522 10
Polk, of Tennessee.....	400,000 00
Vincent, of Alabama.....	243,148 84
Tate, of Kentucky.....	247,028 50
Burke, of Louisiana.....	827,000 00
Nolan, of Missouri.....	32,445 00
Hemingway, of Mississippi.....	315,000 00
Archer, of Maryland.....	200,000 00
Total shortage.....	<u>\$2,345,144 44</u>

But I concede that there had swarmed into these States an irresponsible, dishonest horde of camp-followers and carpet-baggers, many of whom, bent upon public plunder, took advantage of the ignorance, and credulity, and cupidity of the blacks; and that under their leadership, follies in legislation, and outrages in legislation, drove the already impoverished States into hopeless financial ruin.

Upon this presentation, I submit the case to you, my colored hearers, as my jury, whether, in view of the infirmities of human nature, in view of the bias of early education, in view of the sullen bitterness following defeat in arms, and, finally, in view of the ignorant and corrupt management of public affairs, the whole people of the South might not reasonably have been expected to be wrought up to bitter wrath.

And now let me talk to the Southern whites with equal candor, as to the mistakes, follies and crimes which they have contributed, to bring upon themselves the trouble, with which they are to-day confronted.

The war had been fought to the bitter end. The Confederacy had sent its last man to the field, and had spent the last dollar of its treasure. But from the desolation of your own homes and fields, you looked over into the States which had remained in the Union, and there you saw them stronger in men, and richer in material resources, than they were when the fight began.

True, there was mourning in hundreds of thousands of homes over those who came not back from the war. But, despite the mourning, spindles hummed, and shuttles flew, and ships sailed, and railroads reached out towards the Pacific; the soldiers were paid, taxes were paid, bounties were paid, debts were paid, and a strong people went and came clad in the panoply of might.

It is not strange that you were disappointed, and sorrowful, and sullen; but in your disappointment, and sorrow, and wrath, you ought to have seen things that you did not see.

You had proven the fallacy of the belief that "one Southerner can whip six Yankees." You knew that by the laws of nations, and of your country, your lives could be claimed as forfeit, and that in other rebellions, and in other countries, there always had been executions following defeat.

But instead of punishment, the States which had held aloft through four years of assault the flag which *had* been yours, and which *is to be* yours through all coming generations, came with palms stretched forth for the grasp of friendship. They said to you, "We don't want your lives; we have taken too many lives already. We don't want your property; what little there is left you need, and we do not. Give us some pledge that you will respect the rights of the freedmen, whom the exigencies of the war have freed. Give us renewed promises to support the Constitution, thus amended, and join hands with us in the march of greatness, which God has ordained for this Republic."

And you would not do it. Bear in mind universal suffrage was not then demanded as the price of reconstruction; and that out of the eleven States lately in rebellion only Tennessee accepted the terms offered by the

Federal Government, and the other ten, of which North Carolina was one, rejected it with scorn. If you had accepted those terms, even if unrestricted suffrage had gone hand in hand with them, no carpet-baggers could have ever been able to mislead the colored people, as a body.

The colored man had played with you as a boy. He instinctively admitted your superior knowledge and judgment; he would have come to you for advice from force of habit, and you could have directed political affairs through him, for the good of the Commonwealth, as later the carpet-bagger did to its detriment.

But, instead of this, your Legislatures began to enact laws looking to a separate code for the black man, and for the white, and in some instances, notably in Alabama and South Carolina, laws were enacted which in practice would have placed the black man in a condition but little preferable to that of slavery.

In my judgment a worse mistake was never born of prejudice and wrath.

What then followed? The various amendments to the Constitution were all ratified by the votes of the carpet-baggers and negro Legislatures, and you, thus *reconstructed by negro votes*, slowly commenced to rehabilitate yourselves in your devastated homes.

Soon, with the return of comfort, you began to study methods whereby you might correct the misgovernment which was crippling your States. Your pride, your prejudice, and your poverty, alike forbade your taking the slow, laborious, and even humiliating task, of educating the freedmen for the duties which they had assumed—unfortunately without knowledge, and without fitness.

But, to relieve yourselves from the great difficulties which surrounded you, and the great wrongs under which you suffered, you deliberately agreed among yourselves, to commit a wrong against the very essence of free government.

You deliberately decided that an inferior race, should not from their numerical majority, make laws for the superior race, and to that end you combined your superior intelligence, your superior prestige, and your superior wealth, to thwart the honest casting and counting of the negro vote, by trick, by fraud, by intimidation, or by violence and death, if need be.

And I charge, not in a spirit of recrimination, but in all kindness and sadness I charge it, that that determination, and the means used in carrying it out, are the darkest spots upon the escutcheon of popular government, to be found in all the republics of Christendom to-day.

That that purpose was taken, and that you are living up to it you do not in private pretend to deny, but, on the contrary you affirm it; and it is at once a proof of to your inborn love of truth, that you do not deny it, and of your benumbed moral sense that the fact can exist.

Said an eminent Southern statesman, recently my colleague in Congress, to a party of Northern Representatives with whom he was exchanging good-natured raillery: "What do you all at the North let your political campaigns cost you so much for? In my district it only costs \$250 to

run a campaign, and we spend that for powder, and fire most of it off the night before election, to let the darkies all know that there is to be a fair election the next day."

The man who said this, is a genial and kindly man, of great ability as a lawyer and a legislator, who hates deception, and whose zeal for honesty in speech, leads him to disclose a moral obliquity which, in my humble judgment, the ages to come will brand as a crime against popular government, and against humanity.

I shall not enumerate or dwell upon these wrongs. It would do no good, and is foreign to my purpose.

And now, what word can I speak of counsel, or of warning, to you young men and women, and to all my fellow-citizens of Carolina and the South, upon this Southern question?

To you, the president, faculty, and students of Livingstone College, I have this to say: Press forward in your good work. Spread intelligence, quicken industry, frugality and thrift among your people; raise their standards of virtue; teach them to respect themselves, and thus command the respect of others. Be a living embodiment of the immortal words attributed to Cato's son:

"'Tis not in nature to command success;  
But we will do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it."

"And having done all, stand." Stand in an unfaltering faith in God, who, as the world's history attests, has never left nor forsaken those who put their trust in him.

Cultivate patience. It has been but twenty-nine years since the trumpet sounded for this country to enter the Red Sea of blood through which you were to pass to your deliverance. But the chosen people of God (white people at that, who were escaping from an African bondage) when they went forth, were wanderers for forty years in the wilderness.

In the twenty-five years since the war ended, your people, the freedmen and their children, have accumulated more than \$100,000,000 of property, and the next \$200,000,000 will come to you more easily than did the \$100,000,000. You have doctors of medicine, and doctors of divinity, and respected and respectable legislators, and ministers in national affairs. What though you are surrounded with difficulties, look about you; see the condition of the African race wherever else he is on the face of the globe, and note the fact that you tower above your brethren as the mountain peaks tower above the foot-hills at their feet!

And what have I to say to my own kinsmen and friends at the South? To you I must speak with the candor of the prophet of old, who told his king, "Thou art the man."

My friends, I have once said that the rejection by you of the first overtures of reconstruction, in which you were asked to give guarantees of full protection to the freedmen, was a mistake. I recur to it again to say that it was worse. It was ingratitude.

Such a spectacle was never before presented in history, as the negro presented during the war. For four years the most gigantic war of all

time, was waged over his status, and for the last two years, he knew it as well as you did.

During those two years, the strength of manhood was at the front, and the war was being prolonged by his labor, and he knew it. During those two years, he never betrayed a Northern fugitive escaping from a Southern prison on the one hand, and on the other, he never raised a hand against your homes, or your loved ones.

When the destroying ranks from the North swept upon you, he secreted what little treasure you had left, from fire and from marauder, where you could not yourselves even have found it, and when danger was past he returned it to you. The wasting scourge of war made you paupers, and though he was freed by the war power, he remained with you a pauper's slave, that he might minister to your helpless ones.

And when hunger, gaunt and grim, stared you in the face, as it did thousands in these stricken States, the negro went hungry to bed as hungry as did his mistress or his old master.

Oh, there is many a young man now in the full vigor of successful manhood who in the trying days of '63 and '64, was lulled to sleep upon the knees of his colored nurse, to the crooning of a weird minor strain,

"Nobody knows de trouble I see:  
Nobody knows but Jesus;"

and the white mother, and the black mammy both went hungry to bed, that there might be a morsel of food left in the house for the baby's breakfast.

Do I overstate it? Let one of your North Carolina historians testify.

Mr. John W. Moore, in a recent history of this State, speaking of the frequent desertions of those times, cites the case of the court martial in the Army of Northern Virginia of an artilleryman named Edward Cooper, who was tried for desertion.

The artilleryman refused counsel, admitted quitting his post without leave, and gave as his only excuse the following letter from his wife:

"MY DEAR EDWARD: I have always been proud of you, and since your connection with the Confederate army I have been prouder of you than ever before. I would not have you do anything wrong for the world; but before God, Edward, unless you come home we must die. Last night I was aroused by little Eddie's crying. I called and said: 'What is the matter, Eddie?' And he said: 'O, mamma, I am so hungry.' And Lucy, Edward, your darling Lucy, she never complains, but she is growing thinner and thinner every day.

"And before God, Edward, unless you come home we must die.

"Your MARY."

He was asked what he did on the reception of the letter. He replied that he had made three separate and ineffectual applications for a furlough, and then resolved, at whatever cost, to visit his home. But, he said, his wife was broken-hearted at his absence without leave, and he

closed his defence by saying: "I am here, gentlemen, not brought back by military power, but in obedience to the command of Mary, to abide the sentence of your court."

He was convicted and sentenced to be executed, but pardoned by that kind-hearted, great, and good man, General Robert E. Lee, whom I esteem to have been as true a patriot as ever lived, except that he fatally mistook the government to which his supreme allegiance was due, and gave to Virginia that which belonged to his whole country.

I cannot pass this incident by, without one word more, as to the sublime virtue of Mary Cooper, wife of Edward Cooper, the humble soldier who served a Confederate battery.

Mr. President, you may seek through ancient and modern times, without finding a parallel to her patriotic devotion and self-sacrifice.

In my humble judgment, her name will live on the page of American history, as the Spartan mother's lives on that of Greece, who, as her son went into battle, put his shield into his hand, saying, "*tautēn ē epi tautē*," "this or upon this." Bring it back victorious or let your dead body be borne back upon it. And down through the ages will live the words "Go back, Edward, and abide the sentence of your court."

And when such ghastly famine stared thousands upon thousands in the face, the negro worked that he and his impoverished owners might share the morsel that his labor procured.

You men of the South are lovers of the chase, and love your horses, and your dogs.

If your dogs had protected your family in some hour of supreme need, you would hold them sacred in your love forever after. If an exigency had arisen, when life and death hung on the action and the endurance of your thoroughbred, your remembrance of the responsive intelligence, the quivering sinew, the elastic bound, which tired not till it brought life and safety to your household, would hold your horse ever in undying affection and gratitude.

And shall your gratitude, or your love for your dog or your horse, outweigh your justice to the men and women, who served you with such fidelity, in the hour of your direst need?

But, my countrymen, there are yet considerations higher than gratitude to prompt you to justice. Your wrong against a fair, free suffrage does not stop with the wrong to the blacks. It is a wrong against me, and against every voter in the land, and, most of all, it is a wrong against yourselves and your children.

The wrong of slavery did not stop with its injustice to the slave. It was a wrong against the white race, only excelled by that against the black.

If your property in womanhood well nigh broke down all virtue in the slave, at the same time it sapped the very foundations of purity in the master. How fearful was the blight in many a Southern household, let the older among you recall to mind, though in kindness you may never depict it; and the wrong of a fraudulent ballot will in the end be as bad for the defrauder as for the defrauded.

I have already spoken of your inherent love of truth and of honesty, and up to the present hour, barring your settled determination and practice not to permit negro ascendancy, as you term it, I believe Southern elections are equally free, if, indeed, they are not more free, from corrupt practices and methods than are the elections elsewhere throughout this country.

Do you remember the aphorism of Mr. Lincoln, spoken before ever he was a candidate for the presidency, that "this country must become either all free or all slave"?

I apply the remark to political honesty, and I affirm that the elective franchise must be so administered that as a system it shall be all honest, or it will be all dishonest.

A fraud in an election begun only against the black man, if persisted in, breaks down the moral sense of the participants till the sacred obligation of a pure ballot is obliterated in all elections.

In every community there will be here and there cases of dishonest voting, just as in business there will be dishonest dealing; and as in business certain cases of dishonest dealing will be punished and some will go free, so some frauds in elections will be punished and some not.

But you may as well put your faith in the enduring honesty of a community who have banded themselves together to defraud a certain class of persons of their possessions, as in one who have banded together to defraud a class of their votes. No man can be a participant in such measures and long retain his own self-respect.

I refrain from the expression of even sadder anticipations, which must result, in the end, if justice is to be persistently disregarded in our elections.

But I remind you that injustice toward the African race has once brought a fearful heritage of death, and bereavement, and poverty to this our much-beloved land. I remind you that throughout our national existence, there has always been a conscience which recognized the sacredness of human rights, and which recognizes to-day that things are wrong because they are unjust, and right because they are just. And I plead with my brethren of the South to mold the negro voter by kindness, by education, by magnanimity, into channels which shall enhance the true greatness of the State, and to frown down lawlessness and intimidation and fraud, which can only debase and degrade all popular government.

And now I recur again to my statement, that what the intolerance of bigotry could not do in the first half of the seventeenth century, the intolerance born of slavery is doing to-day, in the last years of the nineteenth.

We all know what happened in Massachusetts in the winter of 1635 and 1636, when Roger Williams was driven from that colony. Let us see what happened in the winter of 1889 and 1890, in the State of North Carolina, when Thomas M. Joiner was driven from this State.

And that there may be no bias in my statement of facts I shall quote only from North Carolina archives.

Of the character of Thomas M. Joiner I have no further knowledge than that he was a minister of Christ, of advanced age, a Methodist and



an Englishman. That there was nothing known against his reputation, as such minister, at the time when the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South met in the year 1889, is shown by the fact that the Bishop of this diocese sent him as a missionary to preach to the colored people in Randolph county.

On the night of December 20, 1889, he and his aged wife were assaulted by armed and masked men, and were commanded to leave the State.

They did so, and Mr. Joiner, being a British subject, made a statement as to the assault, to the British Minister at Washington.

By direction of the English Government the charges were laid before the State Department of the United States, with a request for an investigation,

The Secretary of State referred the matter to the Governor of North Carolina, and the Governor referred it to the attorney-general, who, in turn, referred it to the Hon. B. F. Long, solicitor for the eighth judicial district, in which district I now address you.

Mr. Long reported to the attorney general that Mr. Joiner had left the State, and had made no complaint to the grand jury. He said that he had stirred up strife between the whites and the blacks by practicing social equality; that he "ate with negroes," and that "he was a bad man."

And your State archives at Raleigh show these facts as the answer to an inquiry as to an assault by armed and masked men upon a minister of the gospel and his wife.

How history repeats itself! Centuries ago there was a Missionary sent to labor among the poor of Asia. As his work progressed, strife was stirred up between the aristocratic and the poorer strata of society where He labored.

And it finally resulted in an inquiry made at the instance of the Roman Government.

And the aristocrats said of Him, "He stirreth up the people;" "He cateth with publicans and sinners," and in their blind fury they put Him to death as "a bad man."

Will Mr. Moore, in his next edition of his history, explain the difference between the bitter prejudice and hatred which crucified Christ and that which drove out Thomas M. Joiner?

Oh, let me urge you my kinsmen to throw aside prejudice, and to strive to lift up, not to trample down, these poor among you! Live to-day so that the muse of history, when she recounts your achievements, shall never, in the light of advanced civilization, have reason to blush over the continuance of wrong against humanity, against your country, and against yourselves.